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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/083,353	02/27/2002	Ken Yoshioka	503.38156VX1	1842

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EXAMINER

MOORE, KARLA A

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

1763

DATE MAILED: 10/01/2002

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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	10/083,353	YOSHIOKA ET AL.
	Examiner Karla Moore	Art Unit 1763

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on _____.
 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 1-3 is/are pending in the application.
 4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
 5) Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
 6) Claim(s) 1-3 is/are rejected.
 7) Claim(s) ____ is/are objected to.
 8) Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
 10) The drawing(s) filed on 27 February 2002 is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 11) The proposed drawing correction filed on ____ is: a) approved b) disapproved by the Examiner.
 If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
 12) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. 09/493,104.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
 * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
 14) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
 a) The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
 15) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
 2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
 3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) 3.

- 4) Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____.
 5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
 6) Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

1. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

2. Claims 1 and 3 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,769,952 to Komino.

3. Komino discloses an apparatus for processing a specimen, comprising: an etching process unit (Figure 1, 10A-C; column 5, rows 48-59) which is supplied with a gas to produce a plasma (column 12, rows 9-12); a rinsing unit (18A and 18C; column 6, rows 7-10); and a dryer unit (18D and 18D; column 5, rows 48-59) for drying said exposed surface.

4. With respect to claim 3, Komino teaches that any number of the three processing chambers, !0A-C, may be etching chambers (column 5, rows 48-59).

5. With respect to limitations in claim 1, drawn to an intended method to be performed using the claimed apparatus, the courts have ruled that a claim containing a "recitation with respect to the manner in which a claimed apparatus is intended to be employed does not differentiate the claimed apparatus from a prior art apparatus" of the prior art apparatus teaches all the structural limitations of the claim. Ex Parte Masham, 2 USPQ2d 1647 (Bd. Pat. App. & Inter. 1987).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

6. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the

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invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

7. Claim 2 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Komino as applied to claims 1 and 3 above, and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,303,671 to Kondo et al. and Japanese Patent No. 60183996 to Kameyama.

8. Komino discloses the invention substantially as claimed and as described above. Additionally, Komino further discloses: an atmospheric loader (20); a vacuum transport chamber (14) having a vacuum transport robot (16) therein; and unload and loadlock chambers (130A and 130B) connecting between said atmospheric loader and said vacuum transport chamber for delivering the specimen, wherein said vacuum transport chamber is connected to said etching process chamber of said apparatus, and said atmospheric loader is connected to said rinsing unit and drying unit.

9. However, Komino fails to teach a rinsing cup in the rinsing unit and a hot plate in the drying unit.

10. Kondo et al. teach the use of a hot plate for the purpose of heating (drying) a specimen after washing (column 8, rows 28-30).

11. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the Applicant's invention was made to have provided a hot plate in the drying unit of Komino in order to heat (dry) a specimen after washing as taught by Kondo et al.

12. Kameyama teaches the use of a rinsing cup for the purpose of reducing the adhesion of dust, to use only a small amount of a treating liquid, and to equalize the extent of a treatment (purpose and constitution).

13. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the Applicant's invention was made to have provided a rinsing cup in the rinsing unit of Komino in order to reduce the adhesion of dust, use only a small amount of treating liquid and to equalize the extent of the treatment as taught by Kameyama.

Conclusion

14. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

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Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Karla Moore whose telephone number is 703.305.3142. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday, 8:30am-5:30pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Gregory Mills can be reached on 703.308.1633. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are 703.872.9310 for regular communications and 703.872.9311 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 703.308.0661.

km
September 26, 2002



GREGORY MILLS
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 1700